

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 are currently pending in the above-identified application. Claims 1, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17, 20 and 21 have been amended. Support for these amendments is identified in the following remarks. No new matter is believed to be added by these amendments.

The withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-6, 8 and 16-20 in view of Ospinal *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,965,508) is acknowledged.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-5 and 16-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Rolfes (U.S. Patent No. 5,972,861) for the reasons of record set forth in Paper #6. (Applicants separately respond (below) to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 in view of Rolfes.)

The Examiner maintains that the claims as allegedly anticipated in view of Rolfes for the reasons set forth in Paper #6. Briefly, the Examiner believes that the recited compositions of the instant claims comprise two portions which can be combined as an agglomerate. In particular, the Examiner reasons that the first portion and the second portion are mixed as recited by claim 1, which allegedly means mixing at least these two components together to form a resultant detergent composition. The office action refers to the Specification at page 4, lines 5-20, in which it is stated that “[e]ach portion typically comprises a plurality of particles ..., [w]hen the particles [*sic*, portions] are admixed, the particles are co-mingled, but remain physically distinct ..., [t]he portions can be combined in any suitable ratios, according to the desired properties of the final composition” (emphasis by Examiner).

The Examiner concludes that Applicants are taking two different components, mixing them to form a final composition in which the portions are mixed but remain physically distinct, as in an agglomeration process, and forming a resultant composition. The Examiner maintains that the two particles remain physically distinct

when agglomerated since the physical properties of each particle does not change. The Examiner suggests adding the word “separate” to indicate and clarify that the first particles and the second particles are not agglomerated together.

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and the Examiner’s reasoning. Applicants believe that the Examiner has not correctly interpreted the cited section of the instant Specification. Each portion comprises a plurality of particles. When the portions, or particles, are admixed, the particles are commingled, but remain physically distinct. (See Specification, page 4, lines 6-8.) The ordinary meaning of distinct is “not identical; separate; individual.” *The Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus*, Oxford University Press (New York 1996), page 417. (See attached.) Thus, the admixed or combined portions are a mixture of the particles, in which the particles are commingled, but the particles remain separate.

Without acquiescing to the Examiner’s rejection, but to proceed with more compact prosecution of this case, Applicants amend claims 1, 9 and 16 to further clarify that the recited composition comprises separate and physical distinct particles. Support for this amendment is found throughout the instant Specification, such as, for example, the following: page 3, line 28 to page 4, line 8; and page 16, line 27 to page 17, line 7; and in the ordinary meaning of the phrase “physically distinct.” Applicants also amend claims 1, 9 and 16 to recite that the second particles are free of α -sulfofatty acid ester. Support for this amendment is found throughout the instant Specification, such as, for example, the following: page 3, lines 9-15, 16-24 and 25-28; col. 5, lines 2-3; and col. 8, lines 9-10. Applicants believe that these amendments further clarify the claims and are commensurate in scope with the original claims in light of the Specification. Applicants therefore believe that these amendments do not narrow the claims.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-5 and 16-20 stand rejected in the alternative under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being allegedly obvious in view of Rolfes (U.S. Patent No. 5,972,861) for the reasons of record set forth in Paper #6.

The Examiner believes Rolfes discloses a first portion and a second portion which are mixed, as recited by claim 1, which allegedly means mixing at least these two components together to form a resultant detergent composition. The office action refers to the Specification at page 4, lines 5-20, in which it is stated that “[e]ach portion typically comprises a plurality of particles ..., [w]hen the particles [sic, portions] are admixed, the particles are co-mingled, but remain physically distinct ..., [t]he portions can be combined in any suitable ratios, according to the desired properties of the final composition” (emphasis by Examiner).

The Examiner concludes that Applicants are taking two different components, mixing them to form a final composition in which the portions are mixed but remain physically distinct, as in an agglomeration process, and forming a resultant composition. The Examiner maintains that the two particles remain physically distinct when agglomerated since the physical properties of each particle does not change. The Examiner suggests adding the word “separate” to indicate and clarify that the first particles and the second particles are not agglomerated together.

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and the Examiner’s reasoning. Applicants believe that the Examiner has not correctly interpreted the cited section of the instant Specification. Each portion comprises a plurality of particles. When the portions, or particles, are admixed, the particles are commingled, but remain physically distinct. (See Specification, page 4, lines 6-8.) The ordinary meaning of distinct is “not identical; separate; individual.” *The Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus*, Oxford University Press (New York 1996), page 417. (See attached.) Thus, the admixed or combined portions are a mixture of the particles, in which the particles are commingled, but the particles remain separate.

Rolfes, therefore, fails to teach or suggest all of the limitations of Applicants' instantly claimed compositions. As discussed above, Applicants respectfully do not believe that Rolfes discloses a composition having reduced di-salt formation comprising a first portion and a second portion, each portion comprising particles which remain physically distinct when mixed. Further, Applicants do not believe Rolfes teaches a second portion which contains an additional detergent component that causes more than a minor amount of additional di-salt formation. Instead, Rolfes teaches that "[o]ther non-surfactant additive[s] suitable for use in the present invention include those additives found in traditional laundry detergent compositions. ... The only limitation in the use of such additives is that they do not degrade either the composition or the material it cleans." (U.S. Patent No. 5,972,861, at col. 4, lines 53-59.) Thus, Rolfes appears to teach excluding materials that degrade components, such as α -sulfofatty acid esters; Rolfes does not teach or suggest a composition in which substances which cause more than a minor amount of additional di-salt formation are sequestered in the composition.

Furthermore, Applicants do not believe there is a suggestion or motivation in Rolfes to modify Rolfes' disclosed composition to make Applicants' claimed composition. Although the Examiner asserts that Rolfes teaches that the composition can be in solid, liquid, paste, granular or bead form, Rolfes teaches that such forms would be homogeneously mixed and would exclude di-salt forming substances. Indeed, there is no teaching or suggestion in Rolfes to sequester di-salt forming substances, instead of simply excluding them. "The mere fact that the [reference] may be modified in the manner suggested by the Examiner does not make the modification obvious unless the [reference] suggested the desirability of the modification." *In re Fritch*, 23 USPQ2d 1780, 1783-84 (Fed. Cir. 1992). Further, by teaching exclusion, as opposed to segregation, Rolfes teaches away from Applicants' claimed compositions. A reference "must be considered in its entirety, *i.e.*, as a whole, including portions that would lead away from the claimed invention." MPEP §2141.02.

Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of these claims as allegedly obvious in view of Rolfes.

Claims 1, 4, 5-10 and 13-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being allegedly unpatentable over EP 336,740 (EP '740) for the reasons of record set forth in Paper #6. Claims 1-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being allegedly unpatentable over Kaminsky (U.S. Patent No. 4,487,710) for the reasons of record set forth in Paper #6.

The Examiner believes EP '740 and Kaminsky disclose a first portion and a second portion which are mixed as recited by claim 1, which allegedly means mixing at least these two components together to form a resultant detergent composition. The office action refers to the Specification at page 4, lines 5-20, in which it is stated that "[e]ach portion typically comprises a plurality of particles ..., [w]hen the particles [sic, portions] are admixed, the particles are co-mingled, but remain physically distinct ..., [t]he portions can be combined in any suitable ratios, according to the desired properties of the final composition" (emphasis by Examiner).

The Examiner concludes that Applicants are taking two different components, mixing them to form a final composition in which the portions are mixed but remain physically distinct, as in an agglomeration process, and forming a resultant composition. The Examiner maintains that the two particles remain physically distinct when agglomerated since the physical properties of each particle does not change. The Examiner suggests adding the word "separate" to indicate and clarify that the first particles and the second particles are not agglomerated together.

With respect to Applicants' reasoning that EP '740 and Kaminsky fail to address or solve the problem of di-salt formation, the Examiner maintains that the reason or motivation to modify the reference may often suggest what the inventor has done, but for a different purpose or to solve a different problem. The Examiner does not disagree with Applicants' reasoning that EP '740 and Kaminsky fail to disclose, teach, or suggest

that reduced di-salt formation is a problem, or a solution to that problem. The Examiner believes that EP '740 or Kaminsky teach granular detergent compositions containing the same components in the same proportions as recited by the instant claims, and that these references would suggest detergent compositions have the same di-salt formation properties.

Applicants respectfully traverse this reasoning for the reasons set forth above with respect to Rolfes.

✓ Applicants respectfully believe that EP '740 does not disclose a composition comprising a first, or α -sulfofatty acid ester, portion of particles, and a separate, second, or detergent, portion of particles, where the second or detergent portion comprises additional detergent components that cause more than a minor amount of additional di-salt formation. EP '740 merely discloses methods, such as dry blending, co-agglomeration, and spray-drying, for forming a detergent composition. Applicants do not believe EP '740 teaches or suggests segregating α -sulfofatty acid ester from substances that cause more than a minor amount of additional di-salt formation. For example, referring to Examples 1-6, EP '740 generally discloses compositions including anionic surfactant and sodium tripolyphosphate. Those examples do not teach segregating α -sulfofatty acid ester from a material such as sodium tripolyphosphate, which can cause additional di-salt formation. Instead, referring to column 4, lines 33-51, EP '740 teaches combining a surfactant system with builder material and filler salts by spray drying to form a base powder. That slurry can be spray dried and mixed with heat-sensitive materials, such as bleaches and enzymes. Nonionic surfactants can be sprayed onto the base powder.

Further, EP '740 does not disclose, teach or suggest that di-salt formation is a problem, or that reduced di-salt formation is desired. Because EP '740 fails to appreciate this problem, it fails to suggest any solution to the problem, such as segregating components that cause more than a minor amount of additional di-salt formation from the α -sulfofatty acid ester.

Thus, Applicants do not believe the presently claimed compositions are obvious in view of EP '740. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of the claims in view of EP '740.

Applicants also traverse the rejection of claims 1-20 in view of Kaminsky. The Examiner reasons that Kaminsky discloses an intimate mixture of anionic and ethoxylated surfactants, which are agglomerated with neutral or alkaline salt. (*See* Kaminsky, col. 2, lines 46-65, col. 3, lines 11-25, and col. 8, lines 41-51.)

Applicants respectfully note that Kaminsky teaches that agglomeration can be performed, for example, by using a suitable binder or mechanically mixing under pressure. (*See* Kaminsky, col. 2, lines 49-52; col. 3, lines 11-25.) For example, referring to Example 1 of Kaminsky, a paste comprising a mixture of surfactants is sprayed over Group B components of sodium tripolyphosphate, hydrated zeolite, sodium silicate, among other components. The resulting product is an agglomerate.

In contrast, Applicants' claimed compositions reduce such disalt formation through physically distinct α -sulfofatty acid ester and second particles. Based on the cited example and the general disclosure of Kaminsky, Applicants do not believe the Kaminsky teaches or suggests forming a composition having such separate portions of particles. Instead, by teaching an agglomerate, Kaminsky teaches away from Applicants' claimed composition. In addition, because Kaminsky fails to appreciate the problem of di-salt formation, Applicants respectfully believe that Kaminsky fails to teach or suggest any solution to this problem. In particular, Kaminsky teaches contacting α -sulfofatty acid ester with sodium tripolyphosphate, hydrated zeolite or sodium silicate, which can increase di-salt formation by the α -sulfofatty acid ester.

Applicants therefore do not believe Kaminsky properly provides any teaching, motivation or suggestion to modify the composition of Kaminsky to make Applicants' claimed compositions. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of the claims in view of Kaminsky.

Claims 8 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being allegedly unpatentable over Rolfes (U.S. Patent No. 5,972,861) for the reasons of record set forth in Paper #6. Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being allegedly unpatentable over Rolfes (U.S. Patent No. 5,972,861) as applied to claims 1-5 and 16-20 above, and further in view of Kaminsky (U.S. Patent No. 4,487,710) or EP 336,740 (EP '740).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 8 and 15 over Rolfes for the reasons set forth above. Applicants respectfully believe that because claims 1 and 9, from which claims 8 and 15 depend, respectfully, are not obvious in view of Rolfes, claims 8 and 15 are not obvious. In addition, Applicants note that Rolfes teaches combining methyl ester sulfonate with a base soap. The disclosed base soaps are anionic surfactants. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 8 and 15 in view of Rolfes.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 6 in view of Rolfes, or the combination of Rolfes and Kaminsky or EP '740. As discussed above, Applicants do not believe any of Rolfes, Kaminsky or EP '740 disclose, teach or suggest sequestering α -sulfofatty acid ester from detergent components that cause more than a minor amount of additional di-salt formation. Instead, as discussed above, Rolfes teaches excluding di-salt forming substances, whereas Kaminsky and EP '740 appear to teach combining such components with α -sulfofatty acid ester in the same portion. Thus, Applicants do not believe that these references, alone or in combination, teach or suggest Applicants' claimed compositions. Further, Applicants do not believe that Rolfes is properly combinable with Kaminsky and EP '740 because these references provide opposite teachings. Applicants do not believe that references that teach away from each other are properly combinable.

Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejections of claim 6.

Without acquiescing to the Examiner's rejection, but to proceed with more compact prosecution of this case, Applicants amend claims 1, 9 and 16 to further clarify that the recited composition comprises separate and physical distinct particles. Support for this amendment is found throughout the instant Specification, such as, for example, the following: page 3, line 28 to page 4, line 8; page 16, line 27 to page 17, line 7; and in the ordinary meaning of the phrase physically distinct. Applicants believe that these amendments further clarify the claims and are commensurate in scope with the Specification. Applicants therefore believe that these amendments do not narrow the claims.

Claims 1-21 also stand rejected as allegedly obvious in view of Emery (U.S. Patent No. 6,303,358). The Examiner states Emery teaches a particulate detergent composition or component having a bulk density of at least 600 g/l and comprising at least 10% by weight of detergent surfactant and from 10 to 70% by weight of detergency builder, the detergent composition or component being composed of at least two, and preferably at least three, granular components: granules comprising at least 60% by weight of anionic surfactant; granules comprising at least 20% by weight nonionic surfactant and less than 10% by weight of detergency builder; and optionally granules comprising up to 100% by weight of detergency builder and optionally from 0 to 10% by weight of nonionic surfactant. Suitable anionic surfactants are alleged to include "fatty ester sulphonates, C8-C15 primary and secondary alkylsulphates, *etc.*" Suitable nonionic surfactants include primary and secondary alcohol ethoxylates. The particles may be coated with a layering agent.

The Examiner acknowledges that Emery does not specifically teach a granular or powdered detergent composition having reduced di-salt formation containing first particles comprising alpha-sulfofatty acid ester, second particles comprising additional detergent components that cause more than a minor amount of additional di-salt formation, and the other requisite components of the composition in the specific proportions as recited by the instant claims.

The Examiner believes it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to make a “granular or powdered detergent composition having reduced di-salt formation containing first particles comprising alpha-sulfofatty acid ester, second particles comprising additional detergent components that cause more than a minor amount of additional di-salt formation, and the other requisite components of the composition” The Examiner reasons there would be a reasonable expectation of success because the teachings of Emery suggest a granular or powdered detergent composition, as set forth in the claims.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1-21 in view of Emery, believing the presently claimed compositions are not obvious in view of Emery. Applicants respectfully note that because Emery does not appear to address the problem of disalt formation by α -sulfofatty acid esters, Emery does address Applicants’ solution to that problem. For example, Emery teaches that builder, such as aluminosilicate optionally can be included in anionic granules, which can cause disalt formation. Further, Emery appears to make only passing reference to fatty acid ester sulfonates. Further, Applicants note that Emery is silent as to which α -sulfofatty acid esters might be used. Thus, it is not seen how one of ordinary skill in the art would select an α -sulfofatty acid ester, such as a methyl ester sulfonate, out of the list of anionic surfactants disclosed in Emery and then form α -sulfofatty acid ester particles, while sequestering substances which cause additional disalt formation in a second portion of particles.

To further expedite prosecution of a commercially important aspect of the invention, and without acquiescing to the rejection, Applicants’ amend the claims to correspond to the commercially significant aspect of the invention. Claim 1 is amended to further clarify the first particles comprising C₁₆ or C₁₈ methyl ester sulfonate. Support for this amendment is found throughout the instant specification, such as, for example, at page 6, line 1 to page 7, line 2. Applicants also amend claim 1 to further clarify that the first particles are substantially free of substances that cause more than a minor amount of additional disalt formation. Support for this amendment is found throughout the instant

specification, such as for, example, at page 7, line 23 to page 8, line 6. Claim 1 is also amended to further clarify that the second particles comprise nonionic surfactant and an additional detergent component, but is free of α -sulfofatty acid ester. Support for these amendments is found throughout the instant specification, such as, for example, at page 3, lines 9-10 and 16-19.

Claim 3 is amended to further clarify the α -sulfofatty acid ester is a C₁₆ methyl ester sulfonate. Support for this amendment is found throughout the instant specification, such as, for example, at page 6, line 1 to page 7, line 2. Claim 5 is amended in accordance with claim 1.

Claim 9 is amended to further clarify nonionic surfactants which are not recited by Emery and to further clarify the detergent particles are free of α -sulfofatty acid ester. Support for these amendments is found throughout the instant specification, such as, for example, at page 3, lines 9-10 and 16-19 and page 8, lines 16-24. Claim 9 is also amended to further clarify that the α -sulfofatty acid ester is a methyl ester sulfonate and the particles are substantially free of substances that cause more than a minor amount of additional disalt formation. Support for this amendment is found throughout the instant specification, such as, for example, at page 5, line 18 and page 7, line 23 to page 8, line 6.

Claims 10, 11 and 13 are amended in accordance with claim 9.

Claim 16 is amended to further clarify the detergent particles are free of α -sulfofatty acid ester. Support for these amendments is found throughout the instant specification, such as, for example, at page 3, lines 9-10 and 16-19. Claim 16 is also amended to further clarify that powdered or agglomerated methyl ester sulfonate is added to the detergent portion. Support for this amendment is found throughout the instant specification, such as, for example, at page 5, lines 6-7 and 18. Claims 17, 20 and 21 are amended in accordance with claim 16.

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1-20.

Double Patenting Rejections

Claims 1-21 stand provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-27 of copending Application No. 09/574,764. The Examiner believes that although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not allegedly patentably distinct from each other because claims 1-27 of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/574,764 encompass the material limitations of the instant claims. This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Applicants respectfully inform the Examiner that Application No. 09/574,764 has been allowed and has issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,534,464.

Claims 1-21 also stand rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-25 of U.S. Patent No. 6,057,280. The Examiner reasons that although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because claims 1-25 of U.S. Patent No. 6,057,280 encompass the material limitations of the instant claims.

Without acquiescing to the Examiner's rejection, Applicants request the double patenting rejections be held in abeyance pending the indication that the claims are otherwise allowable. Applicants are considering whether to submit a terminal disclaimer solely for its statutory purpose of removing these obviousness type double patenting rejections.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance and an action to that end is urged. If the

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PATENT

Examiner believes a telephone conference would aid in the prosecution of this case in any way, please call the undersigned at 206-467-9600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 5/22/2003

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APPENDIX

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

- 1 1. (Twice amended) A granular or powdered detergent composition
2 having reduced di-salt formation, comprising:
3 first particles comprising ~~α -sulfofatty acid ester~~ C₁₆ or C₁₈ methyl ester
4 sulfonate, wherein the first particles are substantially free of substances that cause more
5 than a minor amount of additional disalt formation; and
6 second particles comprising nonionic surfactant and an additional
7 detergent components that cause more than a minor amount of additional di-salt
8 formation, the second particles having a free moisture content of less than about 6 weight
9 percent, the second particles being free of α -sulfofatty acid ester;
10 the first particles post-added to the second particles, whereby the first and
11 second particles are commingled, but remain separate and physically distinct.
- 1 3. (Once amended) The composition of claim 2, wherein the α -sulfofatty
2 acid ester is a C₁₆ methyl ester sulfonate, ~~a C₁₈ methyl ester sulfonate, or a mixture~~
3 ~~thereof.~~
- 1 5. (Twice amended) The composition of claim 1, wherein the second
2 particles further comprise a builder, ~~a nonionic surfactant,~~ a secondary anionic surfactant,
3 a polymer dispersant, an oxidizing agent, a biocidal agent, a foam regulator, a binder, an
4 anticaking agent, an activator, a catalyst, a thickener, a stabilizer, a fragrance, a soil
5 suspending agent, a soil release agent, a filler, a brightener, a UV protectant, an enzyme,
6 or a mixture thereof.
- 1 9. (Thrice amended) A granular or powdered α -sulfofatty acid ester
2 detergent composition, comprising:

3 detergent particles comprising at least one detergent component that
4 causes more than a minor amount of additional di-salt formation, and nonionic surfactant
5 selected from alkanolamide, polyalkoxylated alkanolamide, polyoxyalkylene alkyl ethers,
6 polyoxyalkylene alkylphenyl ethers, polyoxyalkylene sorbitan fatty acid esters,
7 polyoxyalkylene sorbitol fatty acid esters, polyalkylene glycol fatty acid esters, alkyl
8 polyalkylene glycol fatty acid esters, polyoxyethylene polyoxypropylene alkyl ethers,
9 polyoxyalkylene castor oils, polyoxyalkylene alkylamines, and glycerol fatty acid esters;
10 the second particles substantially free of α -sulfofatty acid ester; and
11 methyl ester sulfonate α -sulfofatty acid ester particles which are
12 substantially free of substances that cause more than a minor amount of additional disalt
13 formation which are post-added to the detergent particles;
14 the methyl ester sulfonate α -sulfofatty acid particles ester post-added to
15 the detergent particles, whereby the methyl ester sulfonate α -sulfofatty acid ester
16 particles and detergent particles are commingled, but remain separate and physically
17 distinct in the detergent composition, and whereby additional di-salt formation is
18 reduced.

1 10. (Twice amended) The composition of claim 9, wherein the methyl
2 ester sulfonate α -sulfofatty acid ester particles are a powder.

1 11. (Once amended) The composition of claim 9, wherein the methyl
2 ester sulfonate α -sulfofatty acid ester is sodium methyl ester sulfonate.

1 13. (Twice amended) The composition of claim 9, wherein the detergent
2 particles further comprise a builder, a ~~nonionic surfactant~~, a secondary anionic surfactant,
3 a polymer dispersant, an oxidizing agent, a biocidal agent, a foam regulator, a binder, an
4 anticaking agent, an activator, a catalyst, a thickener, a stabilizer, a fragrance, a soil
5 suspending agent, a filler, a brightener, a UV protectant, an enzyme, or a mixture thereof.

1 16. (Twice amended) A granular or powdered α -sulfofatty acid ester
2 detergent prepared by:
3 providing at least one detergent component that causes more than a minor
4 amount of additional di-salt formation;
5 forming the at least one detergent component by granulating, spray drying
6 or agglomerating into detergent particles, the second particles free of α -sulfofatty acid
7 ester; and
8 post-adding a powdered or agglomerated methyl ester sulfonate α -
9 sulfofatty acid ester to the detergent particles portion so that the methyl ester sulfonate α -
10 sulfofatty acid ester and detergent particles are commingled, but remain separate and
11 physically distinct; whereby the amount of the di-salt formation is reduced.

1 17. (**Thrice amended**) The composition of claim 16, wherein the methyl
2 ester sulfonate α -sulfofatty acid ester is free of components that cause more than a minor
3 amount of additional di-salt formation.

1 20. (**Once amended**) The composition of claim 16, wherein the methyl
2 ester sulfonate α -sulfofatty acid ester is sodium methyl ester sulfonate.

1 21. (**Once amended**) The composition of claim 16, further prepared by:
2 applying a coating to the methyl ester sulfonate α -sulfofatty acid ester.

The Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus

American Edition

New York Oxford

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS • 1996

Oxford University Press

Oxford New York
Athens Auckland Bangkok Bogota Bombay
Buenos Aires Calcutta Cape Town Dar es Salaam
Delhi Florence Hong Kong Istanbul Karachi
Kuala Lumpur Madras Madrid Melbourne
Mexico City Nairobi Paris Singapore
Taipei Tokyo Toronto

and associated companies in
Berlin Ibadan

Published by Oxford University Press, Inc.
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016

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Also published as *Reader's Digest Oxford Complete Wordfinder*
by The Reader's Digest Association, Inc., Pleasantville, New York

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First British edition published in 1993 as *The Reader's Digest Oxford Wordfinder*; and published in a revised edition in 1995 as *The Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus*. Original text from *The Concise Oxford Dictionary, Eighth Edition*, edited by R. E. Allen © 1990 Oxford University Press. Additional material from *The Oxford Thesaurus, First Edition* © 1991 Laurence Urdang. Further additions © 1993 Oxford University Press and © 1993 The Reader's Digest Association Limited.

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
The Oxford dictionary and thesaurus.—American ed.
p. cm.

Americanized version of the Oxford dictionary and thesaurus.
Also published as: "Reader's Digest Oxford complete wordfinder"
by the Reader's Digest Association—Publisher's info.

ISBN 0-19-509949-4

1. English language—United States—Dictionaries. 2. English language—United States—Synonyms and antonyms. 3. Americanisms—Dictionaries.
I. Title: Reader's Digest Oxford complete wordfinder.

PE2835.092 1996
423—dc20

96-14847
CIP

135798642

Printed in the United States of America
on acid-free paper

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Project staff ix

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remoteness; haughtiness, hauteur, stuffiness, standoffishness. • **v.** 1 separate, dissociate, disassociate, set apart. **a** at a distance. 1a. go the distance 2 get things off; see also ENDURE 3. within distance see NEARBY **adv.**

at/adj. 1 a far away in space or time. (foll. by from) at a specified distance (distant from them). 2 remote or far apart in position, etc. (a distant prospect; a distant relationship). 3 not intimate; reserved; cool (a distant nod). 4 distracted (a distant stare). 5 faint; vague (a distant memory to her). **a** distant early warning an early detection of a missile attack. 6 a railroad signal preceding a home signal. **ing.** **adv.** [ME f. OF *distans* stem of *distare*: see DISTANCE]

off, remote, faraway, far-removed, out of the way, off. 3 aloof, detached, reserved, solitary, standoffish, unapproachable, withdrawn, reticent, ceremonious, formal, frigid, unfriendly. 4 remote, abstracted, absent, faraway, detached, distraught. 5 see DISTRAUGHT

distasteful /distə'steɪfl/ **adj.** distastefully **adv.** distastefulness **n.** (usu. foll. by for) dislike; repugnance. (a distasteful for prunes; a distasteful for pain)

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distillery /dɪ'stɪləri/ **n.** (pl. -ies) a place where alcoholic liquor is distilled.

distinct /dɪ'stɪŋkt/ **adj.** 1 (often foll. by from) a not identical; separate; individual. b different in kind or quality; unlike. 2 clearly perceptible; plain. b clearly understandable; definite. 3 unmistakable, decided (had a distinct impression of being watched). **adv.** distinctly **adv.** distinctness **n.** [ME f. L *distinctus* past part. of *distinguere* DISTINGUISH]

1 a separate, discrete, different, distinguishable, individual, sui generis, unique, special, singular. b dissimilar, different, unlike, unlike, contrastive, contrasting. 2 clear, perceptible, plain, vivid, sharp, definite, well-defined, marked, noticeable, recognizable, obvious, precise, exact; understandable, manifest, evident, apparent, explicit, unambiguous, patent, clear-cut, palpable, unequivocal, lucid, pellucid, limpid, transparent. 3 unmistakable, decided; see also DEFINITE 2.

distinction /dɪ'stɪŋkʃən/ **n.** 1 a the act or an instance of discriminating or distinguishing. b an instance of this. c the difference made by distinguishing. 2 a something that differentiates, e.g., a mark, name, or title. b the fact of being different. 3 special consideration or honor. 4 distinguished character; excellence; eminence (a film of distinction; shows distinction in his bearing). 5 a grade in an examination denoting great excellence (passed with distinction). **a** distinction without a difference a merely nominal or artificial distinction. [ME f. OF f. L *distinctio* -onis (as DISTINGUISH)]

1 a differentiation, discrimination, separation, division. c see CONTRAST **n.** 2 b distinctiveness, distinctness, difference, difference, uniqueness, individuality. 3 see HONOR **n.** 1, PRESTIGE. 4 honor, credit, prominence, eminence, preeminence, superiority, greatness, excellence, quality, merit, worth, value, prestige, note, importance, significance, consequence, renown, fame, repute, reputation, celebrity, glory, account.

distinctive /dɪ'stɪŋktɪv/ **adj.** distinguishing; characteristic. **a** distinctively **adv.** distinctiveness **n.**

a distinguishing, characteristic, unique, singular, distinct, individual, personal, typical, idiosyncratic, peculiar. **distinctive** /dɪ'stɪŋktɪv/ **adj.** (fem. *distinctive* pronounced same) having a distinguished air, features, manner, etc. [F, past part. of *distinguer*: see DISTINGUISH]

1 differentiate, tell apart, separate; set apart, single out. 2 characterize, individualize, individuate, particularize, mark (out), identify, indicate; define, designate, denote. 3 sense, make out, perceive, discern, pick out, recognize, identify, detect, notice, literary descry; see, literary espy; hear. 4 (distinguish oneself) see stand out 1.

5 classify, categorize, grade, group, separate, segregate; see also DIVIDE **v.** 3c. 6 differentiate, discriminate, draw (a distinction), tell the difference, judge, decide, tell who's who or what's what.

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1 b see interruption (INTERRUPT). 2 diversion, entertainment, amusement, pastime, recreation, divertimento; relaxation, break, colloq. breather. 3 see absentmindedness (ABSENTMINDED). 4 confusion, perplexity, bewilderment, befuddlement, puzzlement, mystification, bemusement; disorder, disturbance, upset, confusion, agitation, discomposure. 5 see madness (MAD), FRENZY **n.** 1.

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distrait /dɪ'streɪt/ **adj.** (fem. *distraite* /-streɪt/) not paying attention; absentminded; distraught. [ME f. OF *destrait* past part. of *destraire* (as DISTRACT)]

1 see ABSENTMINDED. **distraught** /dɪ'strɔːt/ **adj.** distracted with worry, fear, etc.; extremely agitated. [ME, alt. of obs. *distract* (adj.) (as DISTRACT), after *straught* obs. past part. of STRETCH]

1 distracted, agitated, troubled, disturbed, beside oneself, upset, perturbed, worked up, excited, frantic, at one's wit's end, overwrought, frenetic, nervous, frenzied, feverish, wild, hysterical, delirious, irrational; mad, insane, berserk.

distress /dɪ'streɪs/ **n.** & **v.** **n.** 1 severe pain, sorrow, anguish, etc. 2 the lack of money or comforts. 3 Law = DISTRAINT. 4 breathlessness; exhaustion. **v. tr.** 1 subject to distress; ex-

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